

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA) : (a) The details of estimated plant wise crude steel production and capacity utilisation upto January 1997, during 1996-97, have been shown in the *statement* attached.

(b) to (d) Indian Iron and Steel Company Limited (IISCO) was referred to BIFR in June, 1994. In August, 1996, SAIL had invited offers for participation in the revival/modernisation of IISCO through a joint venture arrangement with SAIL retaining majority shareholding of 51% in the joint venture company. SAIL had received offers from two parties viz. M/s. Tyazhpromexport (TPE) of Russia and M/s. Mitsui of Japan. M/s. Mitsui have since indicated their unwillingness for equity participation which is an essential requirement for selection of a Joint Venture Partner. Consequently at present there is only one offer available for revival of IISCO. In the meanwhile, SAIL have sought extension of time for a further period of 4 months from the BIFR.

As IISCO has been referred to the BIFR, any scheme to be taken up for modernisation will have to be in accordance with the orders of the BIFR in this regard.

Statement

Estimated Plant-wise crude steel production and capacity utilisation during April, 1996 to January, 1997.

('000 Tonnes)

Production	% Capacity Utilisation		
1. Main Producers			
(A) Steel Authority of India Limited.			
(i) Bhilai Steel Plant	3470.7	106.1	
(ii) Durgapur Steel Plant	1009.6	67.3	
(iii) Rourkela Steel Plant	1016.0	78.6	
(iv) Bokaro Steel Plant	3053.9	91.6	
(v) Indian Iron & Steel Company Limited.	292.2	97.4	
(vi) Alloy Steels Plant	206.2	95.2	
(vii) Visvesvaraya Iron and Steel Limited.	75.1	77.6*	
(B) Tata Iron & Steel Co. Ltd.	2583.2	101.6	
(C) Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Ltd.	1831.5	81.4	
2. Secondary Producers			
(i) Electric Arc Furnance Units	3575.1	55.3	
(ii) Induction Furnace Units	2728.7	48.7	

* Annual Plan is taken as capacity for Visvesvaraya Iron and

Gauge Conversion

1053. SHRI SANAT MEHTA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government of Gujarat has given consent of sharing of 1/3rd cost of gauge conversion of Dharangadhra-Kuda railway line in Gujarat;

(b) whether Salt Association has also conveyed his consent to bear 1/3rd cost of gauge conversion project; and

(c) if so, the time by which the above conversion work is likely to be taken up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir, in principle.

(c) In the coming years, subject to availability of resources and finalisation of cost sharing arrangement with Gujarat Government and Salt Association.

Expansion/Upgradation of Telecom System in Kashmir

1054. SHRI GULAM RASOOL KAR : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the funds allocated/utilised for development, expansion and upgradation of telecommunication system in rural/urban areas of Kashmir during the last three years, district-wise;

(b) whether the development of telecommunication in rural areas has been given the top priority and the implementation was very slow due to non-availability of funds and equipments;

(c) if so, the steps proposed to be taken to ensure that projects in hand for rural areas are completed without any further delay in the State; and

(d) the details of projects which are lagging behind the schedule for implementation in the State?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) The details in respect of Srinagar SSA are as per *statement-I* District-wise information is not available.

(b) Yes Sir. Though the funds and equipments were available, the development of telecommunications in rural areas has been delayed on account of law and order conditions in Kashmir.

(c) Periodic review of all projects is taken-up at the highest level and all efforts are being made to accomplish the projects.

(d) Details of projects lagging behind schedule in the State are as per *statement-II*.